

Stillwater Train Derailment Press Release

Reed Point, Mont. (June 26, 2023)

On Sunday evening and Monday morning, progress was made on the removal of railcars that have impacted the Yellowstone River and the Twin Bridges Railroad bridge in Stillwater County, Montana, however a lot of work remains. The contents of both railcars containing sodium hydrosulfide, that were located on the west side of the bridge, have been successfully transferred into stable railcars and moved to safety. Eight railcars on the eastern side of the bridge and did not reach the water. Five of these railcars contain asphalt and three contain fertilizer. Today, construction teams removed the cars containing fertilizer and one asphalt car leaving four asphalt cars remaining on the eastern side of the bridge. These will be removed as cleanup efforts continue. Ten cars are in the river, six contain asphalt, three contain molten sulfur and one contains scrap metal. The condition of these cars, including two that are submerged is a key unknown in the plan to remove them from the water. A dive team has arrived on scene to gather more information about the situation below the surface. Contractors and a large crane have been brought onsite to stabilize and remove these cars from the river. MRL is currently working with their unions and BNSF to find alternative traffic routes to limit supply chain disruptions.

Asphalt globules have been detected downstream on the banks and in the body of the Yellowstone River. This solid waste is not water soluble and is not anticipated to impact water quality. Water quality testing results from Saturday show no detectable levels of petroleum hydrocarbons or sulfur and samples continue to be taken and analyzed. At this time, there are no known risks to public drinking water or private drinking water wells.

Tuesday June 27, the Unified Command plans to send a press release in the morning and in the evening summarizing that day's accomplishments. Unified Command is holding a press conference this evening from 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Additional details are available below:

- <https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/86721593442>
- Call in numbers:
 - +1 206 337 9723 US (Seattle)
 - +1 213 338 8477 US (Los Angeles)
 - +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

A public meeting about the derailment and the response will be held on Wednesday, June 28, at 7:00 p.m. at the Columbus High School Gym, 433 N 3rd St, Columbus, MT 59019. Please park in the west parking lot and enter through the gym doors to enter for the public meeting.

For more information, please visit: <https://response.epa.gov/stillwatertrainderailment> or <https://www.stillwatercountymt.gov/train-derailment/>



Empty rail car that previously contained sodium hydrosulfide [bottom left] and the two new rail cars which all sodium hydrosulfide was loaded into. These rail cars await offsite disposal.

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This response is operating under a Unified Command which enables different jurisdictions and organizations to jointly manage and direct incident activities. Unified Command for this incident is comprised of representatives from Stillwater County Disaster and Emergency Services, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Montana Rail Link.

